



Tapu'itea

...ina ia manino le folauga.

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Dengue fever cases reach 63, outreach programs in the works

The local Department of Health and its epidemiology team are spearheading efforts to combat the spread of dengue fever, a potentially fatal communicable disease that has infected a total of 63 locals this year, as of July 17.

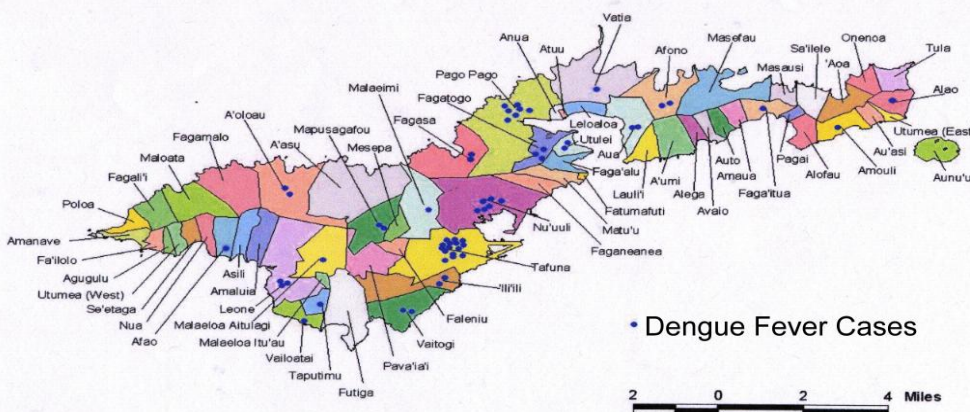
Of that number, 23 people, (15 adults and 8 children), were hospitalized, while the other 40 were treated on an outpatient basis.

Fortunately, despite the high number of confirmed cases, not a single person has died from dengue fever.

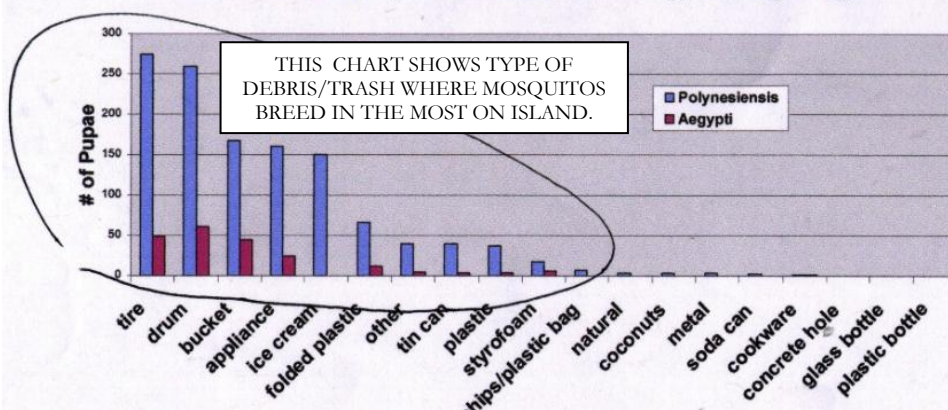
The majority of the victims, 39 to be exact, are from the Western District (mostly from the Tafuna and Nu'uuli areas) while the other 24 are from the Eastern District.

The increase in the number of confirmed cases has sparked DOH to come together with the ASCC Land Grant program and the Office of Samoan Affairs in coordinating ways to conduct outreach programs throughout the different villages, in addition to passing out fliers containing important information about the disease (i.e. how it spreads and how to prevent being at risk). *(Continued on page 7)*

Island wide distribution of dengue cases as of July 27



Total Number of Pupae for Each Container Type in Pago Pago



ASG RADIO PROGRAM

With:

**Governor Togiola
Tulafono**

Saturdays @ 7a.m.

On: Showers of Blessings -

FM 104.5

SHARE IMPORTANT
INFORMATION & ACTIVITIES
with your ASG workforce as well as
the citizens of American Samoa.

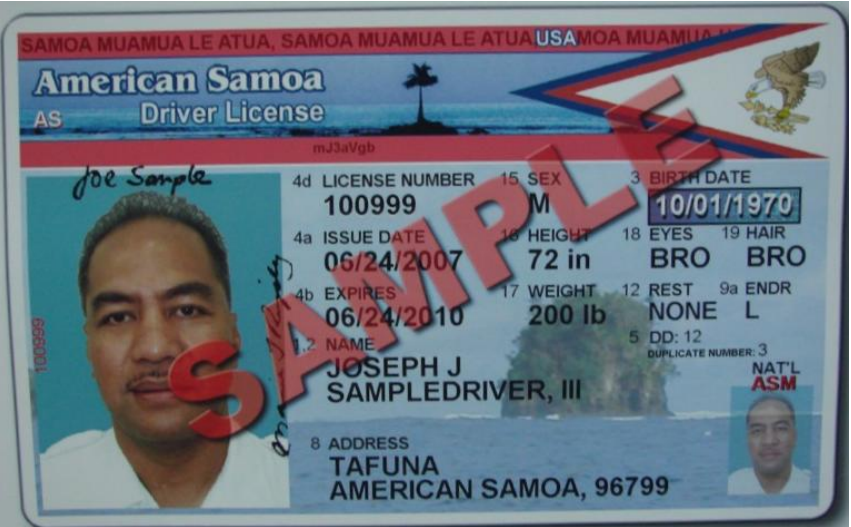
Email your articles,
announcements, pictures or other
information to:

Harry Stevens

(harry.stevens@americansamoa.gov
or

Vince Iuli

(vince.iuli@americansamoa.gov)



New drivers licenses issued to comply with Real ID standards

Of the approximately 8,000 licensed drivers in the territory, over 1600 have applied and received their new drivers licenses. The new drivers license program, which was launched to comply with emerging Real ID standards, was unveiled on June 15, 2007.

"We are due for a change," said Fred Scanlan, project manager for the Office of Motor Vehicles (OMV) in Tafuna who wrote the proposal for the program.

When compared side by side, there are many notable differences between the old and new licenses. First off, the new licenses are plastic, similar to credit cards, while the old ones were print outs that were usually laminated, and could easily be duplicated.

The application process for a new drivers license is simple. Applicants need to bring with them, among other things, a clearance from the District Court, and two forms of identification (i.e. passport, drivers license, birth certificate, military ID). Once all the required documents are presented, the applicant will be called to pose for a photograph and leave a thumb print before their new drivers license is issued. With all the proper paperwork, the process shouldn't take longer than 15-20 minutes.

The new licenses are more modern, as it involves federal guidelines such as security features, biometrics, conversion from manual to electronic, etc. Identifying information such as name, license number, issuance and expiration dates, address, eye color, sex, weight, and height, are on the front side, secured under the seal of American Samoa. On the back side, there is a bar code that, when scanned, will reveal demographic information and other personal data.

All drivers whose licenses are still valid need not rush to obtain their new licenses, as old drivers licenses can still be used until they have met their expiration dates. However, everyone has to be in compliance by 2010.

"We have received a very impressive response from the public," Scanlan said, adding that the new licenses are state of the art products that are very secure and have numerous features for protection from fraud.

Scanlan said that the next phase for the project will include deploying the new vehicle registration and title system.

The new drivers licenses will be on-line with other federal agencies for source verification for immigration status and criminal background checks. (The new drivers licenses feature different colored backgrounds for the photograph. Each color represents the person's immigration status i.e. US national, US citizen, alien). In addition, the information will be accessible to the Social Security Administration and the Department of State (for passport issuance), and it will assist with state to state connectivity, etc.

According to Scanlan, American Samoa and two other states have accepted and deployed its licenses with Real ID compliance standards, while the rest of the states and territories are expected to be in compliance by 2013 as mandated. "This is a huge jump from 20 plus years of trying to implement such a system within the territory," Scanlan concluded.

The new drivers licenses cost \$12

ASG PROJECTS RESUME AS MANDATED BUILDING MATERIALS ARRIVE

All government projects that were halted due to the lack of local and federally mandated Type II cement have resumed. Two of the projects in question include Samoana High School and the Agriculture Office, both of which were at a standstill for several months.

Public Works director Taeaotui Punafo Tilei says that Type II cement has arrived and government projects can now proceed as expected.

Two months ago, several contractors complained about the failure of the American Samoa Government to step in and help them acquire the cement, with some even threatening to submit costly change orders.

Taeaotui reiterated that the failure of the contractors to obtain a steady supply of Type II cement is not to be blamed on his department or even the ASG. "Each and every contractor should know what materials are necessary for the job prior to placing their bids for the work," Taeaotui said. "If you know you can't supply the materials and you don't feel like going outside of the territory to get it, then don't bid and don't blame the government for your shortcomings!"

Taeaotui said that any contractor known to be substituting Type II cement for Type I or any other kind will be cited for non-compliance and money will have to be paid back to the government for the difference in price.

He said that for road projects, Type II cement can be substituted by 1157 cement but this does not include building projects.

Type II cement is a requirement already set forth by the Army Corps of Engineers, FEMA, and the Development Bank of American Samoa (which funds some of the projects), and the AG's Office even issues an advisement in the early 90s about the need to comply with material requirements.

"We have to follow specifications," Taeaotui said. This was echoed by DPW structural engineer for the Civil Highway Division, Mr. Hernilo Rubin who said that although Type I and Type II cement are the same, depending on the corresponding mix, the main difference between is that Type II cement contains a component that is not found in Type I cement, meaning that Type II cement has the strength to resist sulfate attacks, making it better and more suited to withstand chemicals that enter the concrete, make it brittle, and cause it to easily crack.

Because American Samoa is surrounded by water, it is critical to use Type II cement because of its resistance to sulfate, which comes from the ocean and deposited into the soil.

Rubin said that using Type I cement as an alternative to Type II would be irresponsible and dangerous.

Contractors should be advised that Public Works not only has the authority to issue a stop order on any project being carried out against specification, but they can also demolish any structure being built with Type I cement.

"If you know you can't supply the materials and you don't feel like going outside of the territory to get it, then don't bid and don't blame the government for your shortcomings!"

TAEAOTUI TILEI

Senate confirms Matagi as Port director, House yet to vote

The Senate believes that former House Speaker Matagi Ray Mailo McMoore is the right person to take over as Port Administration director and this was evident with a unanimous vote of 17-0 on July 10. Matagi's position will be official once the House of Representatives confirms his appointment. Matagi's confirmation is expected to be one of the agendas on the House calendar when the Fono reconvenes in August.

The Port director position became open after PC Tuitele Fofu Tony resigned to occupy the Fofu County Senate seat left vacant with the passing of the late HC Rev. Sen. Faiivae Apelu Galea'i. It was Tuitele who chaired Matagi's hearing before the Senate Committee of the Whole prior to his confirmation.

Before his appointment as Port director, Matagi was hired to serve as an executive assistant to the Governor. In addition, he was also confirmed two months ago as a member of the Immigration Board.

Matagi was first elected to the lower chamber of the Fono in 1997, where he served as House Speaker from 2001 to 2006.

In his letter to the Fono announcing Matagi's appointment, Governor Togiola Tulafono described Matagi as being "highly qualified for the post." He continued, "Through his experience, he has acquired an extensive knowledge and familiarity with duties of the highest caliber of government." Matagi served in the U.S Air Force and retired as a master sergeant in 1986.

Governor H. Rex Lee Auditorium

By the time the territory hosts the 2008 Pacific Festival, the multi-million dollar renovations to the Lee Auditorium will be complete and the finish work will be nothing less than breathtaking.

Fletcher Construction is staying on top of the much needed renovation project which includes the installation of more modern upgrades and most notably, new roofing and a sign at the entrance that reads: "Governor H. Rex Lee Auditorium."

Department of Public Works director Taeaotui Punafo Tilei explained that part of the work includes changing the interior beams and the installation of an extension for a building that hasn't gone through such extensive work since the mid-60s.

According to Taeaotui, the building will be fully air conditioned, with a conference room and a kitchen. Other additions include state of the art lighting and sound systems, newer bathrooms, a sound and light booth, and new electrical wiring.

The renovations should be completed by August and it is expected that future gatherings held at the Lee Auditorium, commonly known as the Fale Laumei for its turtle shape, will be more spectacular with the upgrades. "It's going to look and feel good once everything is done," Taeaotui said.

Exterior improvements include an improved parking area, new drainage, a rolling gate, and a new roof.

Taeaotui said that for events such as pageants, the mood will be set once the contestants get the chance to walk on the new stage and catwalk, with the special effects from the sophisticated lighting system bringing it all together.



The \$3-million-dollar renovation work to the Governor H. Rex Lee Auditorium is slated to be completed by August. The building will feature state of the art lighting and sound systems, in addition to a conference room, kitchen, newer bathrooms, and central air conditioning, among other things.

HISTORICAL NOTES

By: Stan Sorensen, Historian, Office of the Governor

On August 1, 1883, the Sisters of Our Lady of Oceania opened their first school at Leone, Tutuila.

On August 1, 1942, the U.S. Navy's Mobile Hospital No. 3 ("MOB 3") had 40 buildings (in Mapusaga, where the American Samoa Community College is now located), including an X-ray facility and a second operating room. There were 51 patients in the hospital, and many more beds were soon needed to accommodate the wounded from the Guadalcanal campaign, which began on August 7, 1942.

On August 1, 1967, Owen Aspinall began his term as American Samoa's eighth appointed civil governor (until July 31, 1969).

On August 1, 1969, John Morse Haydon, prominent Seattle Republican and publisher of the *Marine Digest*, who was appointed by Secretary of the Interior Walter Hickel as American Samoa's ninth civil governor, began his term of office (until October 15, 1974).

On August 1, 2002, A.P. Lutali, American Samoa's second elected Governor (1985-1989; 1993-1997) and the fiftieth person to hold the office of Governor, passed away at the LBJ Medical Center in Faga'alu, American Samoa. During his long and distinguished public career, Governor Lutali served as a Sergeant in the First Samoan Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, in World War II, a founder of Samoana High School, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Vice President of the Senate, President of the Senate, Delegate to the U.S. Congress and Governor of American Samoa. He had 10 children, 36 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren. Governor Tauese Sunia, who served as Director of Education and later as Lieutenant Governor under Lutali, described him as "a most noble statesman and leader of the Territory." Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Insular Affairs David B. Cohen remarked that "the people of American Samoa will miss this great man very much."

On August 2, 1978, Congressman Philip Burton (D-CA) introduced legislation to provide that the Territory of American Samoa be represented by a nonvoting Delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives. This became Public Law 95-556 and was made effective October 31, 1978. In the case of the office of the Delegate, American Samoa's federal election laws were patterned after those of the Virgin Islands and Guam. At the time, consideration was not given to whether or not majority or plurality voting should be established for American Samoa. Congress simply enacted legislation to provide American Samoa with representation in the U.S. Congress. No one foresaw 25 years ago that American Samoa's men and women would serve in record numbers in the U.S. Armed Forces which consequently made it impossible for them to participate in runoff elections held two weeks after general elections.

On August 5, 1898, the U.S. Navy Department ordered civil engineer Frank T. Chambers to proceed to Tutuila to construct a wharf, coal shed and other buildings, including an administration building (which subsequently became the Courthouse: Navy Building No. 21).

On August 5, 1878, U.S. Commissioner Gustavus W. Goward and some chiefs of Tutuila signed agreements transferring certain lands in Fagatogo to the U.S. Navy for use as a coaling station. Goward raised the American flag over Goat Island.

On August 5, 1875, Gatewood Sanders Lincoln, 18th naval governor of American Samoa (August 2, 1929-March 24, 1931 and July 17, 1931-May 12, 1932), was born in Liberty, Missouri.

On August 5, 1953, Lawrence McCully Judd ended his term as American Samoa's fourth appointed civil governor (since March 4, 1953). He resigned because of poor health.

On August 4, 1942, the U.S. Naval Station Tutuila received a heavy indicator net to replace the rapidly deteriorating light indicator net in Pago Pago Harbor.

ASCC Reaches Milestone with Elementary Education BA Degree

By James Kneubuhl, ASCC Press Officer

American Samoa Community College (ASCC) President Dr. Adele Satele-Galea'i described the institution's latest milestone as no less than "a cause for celebration". After more than two decades of work by dozens of individuals towards establishing a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree, the College will offer its first 300-level courses this coming semester in the field of Elementary Education. Additional 400-level courses will follow in spring 2008, and ASCC hopes to graduate its first group of students with BA degrees in Elementary Education in 2009.

"When the College conceived the idea of a four year program, we had to plan on achieving major goals such as recruiting a qualified faculty, preferably with doctorate degrees; establishing a library with the holdings required by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC); and securing fiscal stability," reflected Dr. Satele-Galea'i. "Many times, we found it difficult to see the light at the end of the tunnel. In fact, many people questioned our ability to achieve these ambitions. Fortunately, Board of Higher Education Chairman Tauilili Pamerika and the members of the Board for the past six years remained steadfast in their desire to see us succeed."

The ASCC President continued, "Our new BA program represents a collaborative effort between the College, the Department of Education (DOE), and the American Samoa Government, which I know will ultimately benefit us all. I send my thanks out to Governor Togiola Tulafono and DOE Director Dr. Claire Poumele for their commitment to its successful implementation. The Governor's recent announcement to the Fono regarding additional funding to ASCC for the Bachelor's degree program demonstrates his resolve that the College will have the critical resources it needs to make this major step in our service to the community."

While ASCC has had the upper-level courses in development for several years, the College needed authorization from WASC before it could offer students these classes. In early July, ASCC Accreditation Liaison Officer Dr. Kathleen Kolhoff-Belle received the "green light" for the BA-level courses from the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities (ACSCU), a division of WASC. Currently overseeing final preparations before offering the new classes in a matter of weeks, ASCC School of Education Chairperson Dr. Lina G. Scanlan commented, "We haven't had much time to inform the public about the new Elementary Education courses, but we want to inform interested students that they can begin the registration process for them from now through the end of the month."

The first group of 300-level classes next semester will include (ED 300) Foundations of Education; (ED 301) Educational Psychology; (ED 305) Foundations in Curriculum; and (ED 312) Teaching Language Arts to Elementary Students. Dr. Scanlan said her department will offer these courses during evening hours to accommodate teachers who work during the day. She has also hired several new full-time and adjunct faculty members to cover the full range of Teacher Education courses the department will now offer.

This seemingly sudden development at ASCC actually follows years of negotiations with WASC to lay the foundation for the BA program. WASC utilizes two separate accrediting bodies, the Accrediting Commission for Junior and Community Colleges (ACJCC), which reviews the eligibility of schools with two-year programs, and the ACSCU, which applies additional requirements to institutions that offer four-year programs. To offer a university-level degree at a community college, WASC policy requires that ASCC seek separate accreditation for its Elementary Education Program from the ACSCU, while simultaneously maintaining its regular accreditation from the ACCJC for the rest of its curriculum towards its two-year Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Sciences (AS) degrees. Last year, WASC granted ASCC its request for this arrangement, known as "joint accreditation", which enabled the College to proceed with the next step in the process by developing a Substantive Change Report for the ACCJC and an Eligibility Report for the ACSCU.

Having submitted the requested reports, which the respective WASC divisions subsequently reviewed and accepted, the College received official notice earlier this month that the ACSCU has determined ASCC eligible to apply to for Candidacy for a single baccalaureate degree. This allows the College to begin the final stage in the BA accreditation process by opening its 300 and 400-level courses in Elementary Education with accreditation on a provisional basis. In spring 2008, the ACSCU will make a site visit to view firsthand the progress of the Elementary Education Program before issuing its final decision on the accreditation of the ASCC BA degree. In his email granting ASCC the authorization to offer the new courses, WASC Associate Director Dr. Richard Winn offered the encouragement, "Your level of planning speaks well for the following stages."

The years of careful planning put into the ASCC Teacher Education curriculum, which specifically addresses the needs of the instructors serving American Samoa, reflect a vision that goes back several decades. "When I first started work at ASCC in 1978 under President Dr. Sa'eu Scanlan, the members of the Board of Higher Education included the late Mere Betham and Alo Dr. Paul Stevenson," recalled Dr. Satele-Galea'i. "Even at that stage, discussions took place on how to move the College to the point we have just now reached. Many, many additional individuals have made important contributions to this goal over the years, and I regret I cannot name each one, but I attribute our reaching this stage to the groundwork laid by those who worked on this project before us." *(Continued on page 6)*

ASCC Elementary Education BA Degree *(from page 5)*

Vice President Dr. Seth Galea'i said a pivotal moment in the formulation of the ASCC BA degree took place in the late 1980s, when the College commissioned a report from Honolulu-based education specialists Richard and Mildred Kosaki. "We asked the Kosakis to analyze future directions the College could take to best serve the community," Dr. Galea'i recollected. "As they researched the report, the Kosakis compared the resources at ASCC to the overall educational needs in the Territory, and in their final analysis they strongly recommended that the College set the goal of offering an advanced program in Teacher Education." Dr. Galea'i presently heads the American Samoa Bachelors in Education Program (ASBEP) Task Force, which includes Dr. Scanlan; Dr. Kolhoff-Belle; Dean of Academic Affairs Dr. Irene T. Helsham; Associate Dean of Academic Affairs Mikaele Etuale; American Samoa GEAR-UP Director Tupua Roy Fua; and American Samoa Teacher Education Program (ASTEP) Director Peseta Tialuga Seloti.

With the new courses will come some necessary adjustments to registration. "Students who want to enroll in the BA program need to fill out a separate application, which we currently have available," said Dr. Scanlan. "Also, members of the public who want to look into this program, such as working teachers, should know that they first need to enroll with the College before they can apply for our program. As far as registration, we've decided to follow the same schedule as ASTEP this time. We'll open registration for the upper-level courses from August 28th through the 30th, and instruction will begin on September 4th. I should emphasize that this schedule only applies to the new 300-level courses, not the general ASCC curriculum." Advising will take place from now through the end of the month for students who successfully complete their Elementary Education BA program applications.

Anyone with questions about the new program can call the main ASCC line at 699-9155, and ask for Dr. Lina Scanlan.

DOH continue to serve Manu'a residents despite Ta'u Dispensary Project Delay

Pregnant women who live in the Manu'a Islands no longer have to pay over \$100 for travel just to keep up with their prenatal appointments as the service is now available to them. Expectant mothers generally start off with monthly visits that eventually become bi-weekly, then weekly, as they near their due date.

Add all the appointments together and multiply that by the cost of a round trip ticket to and from Manu'a, and that gives you an idea of what being pregnant in Manu'a will cost.

But thanks to approval from Department of Health director Utoofili Asofaafetai Maga, and the dedication of DOH nurse practitioner Tele Frost-Hill, pregnant women in Manu'a can now be examined and receive prenatal services and consultation in their homeland.

The prenatal clinic offers standard blood tests and all the services required during the first trimester of pregnancy.

"We have introduced the prenatal clinic for the residents of Manu'a because they shouldn't have to pay hundreds of dollars just to keep an appointment that often times only lasts a few minutes," said Department of Health medical director Dr. Ivan Tuliau, who coordinates the DOH trips.

Tuliau explained that not only will financial burdens be eased, but making the prenatal program available in Manu'a benefits pregnant women who are considered high risk cases because of medical conditions like diabetes and anemia.

"The goal is that the prenatal clinics will detect problems that may reveal the need for medical evacuations to the LBJ Medical Center for further review or emergency procedures," Tuliau explained. "This is a good way for us to detect problems for both the mother and her unborn child, to ensure early intervention and treatment."

In addition to the new program, DOH makes frequent trips to the Manu'a Islands, in Ofu and Ta'u, offering free medical and dental services for the residents there.

Medications and prescription refills are also offered free of charge.

"We here at DOH are very happy that we can provide everything from medical and dental services to prenatal clinics and special clinics for individuals with special needs, free of charge to the residents of Manu'a," Tuliau said. "They should be able to access all the services we enjoy here."

During their trips, DOH team members see up to 200 patients, mostly children with dental problems, and senior citizens with chronic illnesses.

All DOH trips and emergency medical evacuations are possible with the government owned Segaula aircraft, which is currently being flown by Joseph Misaalefua.

Dengue fever cases reach 63 *(from page 1)*

The growing number of cases has launched an island-wide awareness alert and in response, free fliers and pamphlets have been distributed as inserts in the Samoa News.

The last time a dengue fever epidemic struck the territory was 2001 and 2002 when a total of 1778 cases were reported.

Three lives were lost to the disease in 2001. The combined number of confirmed cases between 2003 and 2006 was only 3.

DOH medical director Dr. Ivan Tuliau says that considering the recent number of cases, dengue fever can be considered an epidemic. And although there is no vaccine available, there are preventive measures that can be taken to protect everyone from getting the disease.

Dengue fever is a potentially fatal communicable disease that is carried through the bite of an infected mosquito, meaning that everyone is at risk of getting the disease. Symptoms include: fever, severe headaches, pains in the body and joints, nausea, vomiting, eye pain, and rash.

As recent as 2005, the Centers for Disease Control(CDC) reported the dengue fever was the most important mosquito-borne viral disease affecting humans, and its global distribution is comparable to that of malaria, as an estimated 2.5 billion people live in areas at risk for epidemic transmission.

More information about dengue fever or other communicable diseases can be obtained by calling the DOH Communicable Disease Program at 633-4627 or 633-4606.



DOH medical director Dr. Ivan Tuliau says that the recent outbreak of dengue fever can be controlled by taking the proper preventive measures. Tuliau and his staff are working with the ASCC Land Grant Program and the Office of Samoan Affairs to keep the public informed by passing out pamphlets and conducting community outreach programs.

The Department of Health recommends following the **3D's of Dengue Prevention** to protect one's self and their families:

1. **DRAIN** standing water around the house that may serve as mosquito breeding sites, including tires, drums, buckets, old appliances, and ice cream containers that can hold standing water.
2. **DRESS** protectively by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, sock, and shoes.
3. **DEET** – Use a mosquito repellent containing “DEET” on exposed skin.

2007 Children's Culture Maintenance Summer Program

Over 100 youngsters received a crash course in, among other things, traditional Samoan weaving and dancing during the nearly month-long 2007 Children's Culture Maintenance Summer Program which was held at the Jean P. Hayden Museum in Fagatogo from July 2-27.

For more than three weeks, youngsters from across the territory experienced the art of making siapo (tapa), wood carving, Samoan dancing, lei processing, storytelling, and singing.

Executive Director for the American Samoa Council on Arts, Culture, and Humanities Mrs. Leala Pili said that the purpose of the annual summer program is to instill in our young people the traditions and cultures of the fa'a-Samoa.

"We want our children to know their roots so they can be proud of being Samoan," she said. "Our goal is to educate them in the traditional arts as a way to preserve our culture."

During the summer program, the children were exposed to carving wood, and story time included the sharing of folk tales and legends. The ultimate finale to officially close the program featured singing and dance numbers performed by the participants.

The youngsters were able to take with them the creations they made, in addition to lessons learned and fond memories.

The annual summer program is sponsored in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.



Executive Director for the American Samoa Council on Arts, Culture, and Humanities Mrs. Leala Pili says that the annual summer program held at the Museum compound in Fagatogo is a good way of preserving our culture through educating our young people on the traditional way of living.

ASG Treasurer wants explanation for Ta'u Dispensary payment

American Samoa Government Treasurer Velega Savali has written to Department of Public Works director Taeaotui Punafo Tilei, requesting the status on the construction of the Ta'u Dispensary, specifically twopayments that have been paid out to the company whose contract to build the Dispensary has been terminated.

In his July 18 letter, Velega expressed concern about two payments totaling \$32,103.96 which have already been issued to Tupuola Filipo Leuta and Union Construction Company.

The two payments, for \$23,775.10 and \$8,328.86, were issued based on approval from Public Works. Velega wrote, "I appreciate your immediate attention to this matter so that our office could take appropriate action to recoup federal funds."

Taeaotui is yet to respond to Velega's letter, but he indicated that the money paid out to Tupuola does not have to be paid back, simply because they were payments for services already rendered.

According to Taeaotui, the payments were for mobilization and site work, in addition to the demolition of the old structure and some building materials.

Meanwhile, Chief Procurement Officer Laau Seui is yet to make a decision on which contractor will continue the work, and two companies are expected to re-submit proposals for the job by next week.

Proposals from both E&W Construction (which Taeaotui recommended to carry out the job), and RM Construction were submitted earlier this month.

Of the two, E&W Construction's proposal was lower. But the CPO wants the proposals to be re-submitted, although each company already knows what the other's proposal was. "The final decision will ultimately be the CPO's call," Taeaotui said.

The Notice to Proceed for the Ta'u Dispensary was issued last year in December, with an expected completion date of seven months later. Had the contract been carried out, the Dispensary would have been dedicated by now.

The project comes with a price tag of over \$490,000 from the Department of Interior - Capital Improvement Project (CIP) earmarked for health.

Taeaotui terminated the contract with Union Construction "for sufficient causes," and said that each contractor, prior to bidding on projects, should be confident that they can carry out the job before committing to it. "This is neither the ASG nor DPW's fault," Taeaotui said.

In addition terminating the contract, Taeaotui also denied a payment request for \$5,000 from Tupuola for cement that Taeaotui said was not at the site during inventory.

And while the wheels are in motion to select a contractor to continue the work, the Senate has recommended to Governor Togiola that Public Works Maintenance and Operations (M&O) crew be assigned to carry out the job.

Roadway excavation issues referred to the AG's Office

Department of Public Works director Taeaotui Punafo Tilei has forwarded to the Attorney General's Office his concerns regarding roadway excavation for underground utility repair by the American Samoa Power Authority.

Taeaotui is requesting that the Attorney General take legal action in the matter as according to him, ASPA officials have failed to offer any response or explanation on what the semiautonomous agency plans to do to repair roadway areas that have been excavated by them for the installation or repair of underground utilities, and their impact on the roadway infrastructure.

In his May 16 letter to ASPA CEO Andra Samoa, Taeaotui wrote, "As you recall, this issue has been discussed with you and several ASPA managers numerous times in the past via meetings and correspondences. However, ASPA has not restored roadway excavations properly or satisfactorily."

According to Taeaotui, Federal Highway Administration territorial representative Pat Phung had expressed disappointment during his last visit in March 2007.

"He especially noted the open trenches on Route 001 due to ASPA work in Gataivai and other areas," Taeaotui wrote, adding that because of that, Phung was considering withholding funds for the Territorial Highway Program.

"The main thing here is: if you break it, you fix it," Taeaotui told the Tapuitema in an interview. "ASPA needs to contract McConnell Dowell (the only contractor that can provide asphalt services at this time) to carry out all road repair work needed to fix any area that has been and will be excavated by them for utility purposes."

Taeaotui informed Samoa that Public Works would take legal action on the issue if ASPA did not address the situation and complete all the work as specified in the letter and accompanying attachments within 20 calendar days from the day they receive his letter.

"All identified work will be at your own cost," Taeaotui wrote. "This is a course of action that is unfortunate but necessary for the sake of the general public and their trust in us for sound public service."